



Three Singers

BY

MARY EARLE HARDY

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THREE SINGERS

BY

Mrs MARY EARLE HARDY.



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"Originally there were three muses worshiped on
Mount Helicon, namely:

Melete (Meditation),

Mneme (Memory)

and *Aoide* (Song)."



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MELETE.

In the Border-Land of Dreams.

To the Seer:

What waters sing and sunsets teach,
Write thou in thy scroll.
The world but sees the form of things;
Thou shalt see their soul.

Of Christ in Galilee.

What if an olive leaf blew down
And touched His face—His hand—
And other leaves in happy whirl
Made cool the beaten sand,
Piled soft the rocky strand;
O olive leaves so frail and gray!
I love you for your deed that day.

What if fair Huleh lilies bent
Their urns of spicery
To anoint His feet, in homage meet,
That they should mentioned be
In His sweet sermonry;
O lilies! sweeter evermore
Are all, for this the love ye bore.

What if the winds from Lebanon
Blew down to Nazareth,
Just for their longing but to touch
His temples' clustering wreath
With sweetly cooling breath;
O winds! but touch our eyelids dim
With healing that ye caught from Him.

What if the tides of Galilee
Were drawn about His feet,
Gave all the white-bowed waves assent
To His commandments sweet,
And ceased their angry beat;
O wind-swept sea of Galilee!
My Master's footsteps hallowed thee.

What if the weary multitudes,
Like waves of Galilee,
Were drawn about His sinless feet
And knew sweet ministry,
Grew calm like restful sea;
O Christ! give Thou such peace to me
As once to storm-tossed Galilee.

Wherefore?

Far amid the crested mountains
There are caverns dark and deep,
Where a beauty speech transcending,
Has for aeons lain asleep;
Never mortal foot has sullied
Stainless parapets of snow
Hanging o'er the unentered portals
Where these jeweled altars glow.

Wherefore were such temples builded
Far from any mortal ken?
Are there eyes that read these gospels
Other than the eyes of men?
'Tis as if the grand old Cosmos,
Tho' she work in hidden spot,
Has a *Truth* that she must utter
Whether men shall know or not.

Legend of the Moss Rose.

Pleasant is the legend olden
Of the moss-rose—veiled flower—
Prized above our lilies golden,
Peer and queen in Flora's bower.

Once, 'tis said, the Saviour, weary,
While His feet the hot sands pressed,
Wandered thro' a desert dreary
Finding neither joy nor rest;

Cruel thorns His tired feet wounded
'Till their blood-stains marked the sand,
Satan's host His soul surrounded
Tempting Him on every hand.

Yet He fell not—He the sinless—
And the powers of darkness fled,
Then came Heaven's approving witness,
And His soul was comforted.

Straight His torn feet press sweet mosses
Where but burning sands had lain,
Soft they wipe with dewy tresses
From each cruel wound the stain.

Breathed He then a blessing holy
O'er the mosses cool and sweet,
Spreading in their worship lowly
Dewy velvet for His feet;

Scarcely had the words been spoken
When the moss-tuft burst apart
And there sprang as Heaven's token
Stainless roses from its heart.

Ne'er before had grown such flower
E'en in Sharon's valley fair,
Ne'er a blossom held as dower
Fragrance so above compare:

Mossy-veiled and dew-besprinkled,
Fit for angel's garment hem,
Pure as stars that whitely twinkled,
Hung each rose, a diadem.

The Glory of the Sky.

Where were the glorious colors born,
The jasper, sapphire, emerald, gold,
Chalcedony in shining fold,
That garnished all the sky at morn?

The sardius, beryl, chrysolite,
The topaz, jacinth, amethyst,
That burned beyond the wreathing mist
And glorified the sky at night?

Were they pure streams of light that fell
From fair foundations jewel-set
Along the jasper parapet
That guards the heavenly citadel?

Asleep.

Little baby lies asleep
In a dream of glory;
By the light upon her face,
By the smile that I can trace,
Half I guess the story
That the angels tell
To my baby Belle.

Wide they ope the pearly gates,
Letting heaven's splendor
Float adown before her eyes,—
Half a memory, half surprise—
While with voices tender,
New delights they tell
To my baby Belle.

And they bring her for her mates
Cherub children holy,
While an angel fair and tall,
Purest, sweetest one of all,
Kisses, bending lowly,
Brow, like pearl and shell,
Of my baby Belle;

Whispers that the angels wait
Close beside her ever;
That her place is kept above
By the One whose name is Love,
Who forgetteth never,
But delights to dwell
With my baby Belle;

Tells her how her gardens fair
Grow each morning fairer;
And the cherub children bring
Palms and lilies blossoming,
But of treasures rarer,
Tenderly they tell
To my baby Belle;

Tell her of the crown that waits
Jewels for its setting,
Of a wondrous harp of gold
That her hands shall one day hold,
Weariness forgetting:
This, and more they tell
To my baby Belle.

Little baby fast asleep
In a dream of glory,
By the golden light that slips
Over brow and cheek and lips,
Do I guess the story
That the angels tell
To my baby Belle?

Broken.

The cup lies broken,
Spilled the wine.
The cup was earthen,
The wine divine!
The cup lies broken,
But ere the wine
To earth has fallen,
A hand divine
In richer chalice
Holds the wine.

Rhigi.

Fair at even Rhigi stood,
Pure as purest womanhood;
Wearing on uplifted brow
Calm of saint with holy vow.

In the dawning's silver mist,
'Neath a sky of amethyst
Touched with shades of opaline,
Rhigi stands a mount divine.

Slowly rides the sun on high,
Royal bridegroom of the sky!
Pauses at the morning's gate,
Lets his steeds of glory wait

That he may behold the grace
Of Mount Rhigi's saintly face;
Scarce we breathe for joy of heart
While in awe we stand apart,

Knowing that the one who waits
At the glowing eastern gates,
Shall with his divine caress
Crown her silent saintliness:—

O'er her brow a flush is spread,
Hanging mists their jewels shed,
On a cloud her white feet bide,
Stands Mount Rhigi glorified!

Death of Mary of Bethany.

In the early dawn of morning
Ere the silver stars have set,
Angels set their wings of glory
O'er the Mount of Olivet;

There one lieth by a casement,
Looking upward to the skies,
Faith and love alike are blinded
In the sweetness of her eyes;

At her side a sister standeth
Bent on holy ministries,
At her feet a brother kneeleth
Who hath known death's mysteries.

Patient waiting, joyous hoping
Flush again the pallid cheek,
While her sweet eyes searching heaven
For one vision only seek;

Straight beyond the blessed angels
Sees she face benignly sweet,
From her glad lips springs "*Rabboni!*"
And her soul is at His feet.

Not Failure.

Despised, misjudged, aweary,
In the lists of life one fell,
No hope had he of winning
Good from the hand of ill.

With many wounds and deadly
Prayed he for death—the sweet—
No more the gathered foemen
With broken lance to meet.

Lo, stood an angel by him
With cup of heavenly wine,
But sweeter than the goblet
The word he spake, divine:

"Bade He who called to conflict
That thou shouldst victory see,
Or spake He but 'Be faithful,
The rest abides with Me!' "

The Poet's Mantle.

I.

A poet died.—His mantle fell
On whom?—The world it could not tell.

II.

A day forgot, in lowly cot,
A child was born—the world knew not.

III.

He grew as grows the fawn and fern
A child of mountain, wood and dearn;

IV.

He learned their lessons in the light
And slept upon their breasts at night:

V.

He shunned the crowding, jostling mart,
Its cries and cavils hurt his heart.

VI.

His thoughts unto the past would turn,
Communed with prophets sweet and stern;

VII.

His eyes unto the future rose,
He saw the clouds a flame disclose;

VIII.

He read the prophet's message right,
He felt the fiery gospel's might. —

IX.

Was this the child—I can not tell—
On whom the poet's mantle fell?

Miserere and Te Deum.

"Weary, weary!" cried my spirit, sick of change
and dark'ning pall;
Deeming death but dismal gateway thro' an
adamantine wall.
Blindly groping, wildly hoping still to find some
rest on earth,
I had sought the balm of healing in the gayest
halls of mirth;
But the blessing, like a phantom, glided far
beyond my reach,
And the spirits of the revel smote me with their
mocking speech.

SPIRITS OF THE REVEL.

"Turn away thou sorrow-laden
Where no lights of pleasure shine
Lest thy paling tears shall mingle
With the purple of our wine,
"Lest the shadows which are shaken
From thy spirits' inner deep
Fall upon our crested gardens
Where our careless hearts-ease sleep;
"We have met for song and revel,
Why has sorrow entered here?
Hast thou thought in weeds and willows
E'er to taste our banquet's cheer?

“See this bowl with leaves encircled,
Goblet meet for gods to hold!
Taste the draught within—nepenthe
Potent as in days of old!

“Fling away the yew and willow,
Toss the dark-boughed cypress by
In the song that floats around thee
Heed no spirit’s smothered cry;

“Bind thy brow with brightest berries,
Grasp the tulip—lipped with fire—
Let the tongues of flame upon it
Quell thy spirit’s wild desire;

“In the spell that falls upon thee
Dream of neither lost nor dead,
On the bread and wine of pleasure
Let thy famished soul be fed.

“When the thorny crown of sorrow
Thou hast changed for iris wreath,
We will laugh and sing together
Far from blighting pain and death.”

Scarcely were these wild notes ended than low
chant my spirit heard
Thrilling with its wondrous cadence, more than
song from throat of bird;

Notes of pity, deep and holy, till my spirit bowed
in prayer;
Then a "Glory! glory! glory!" rang triumphant
thro' the air;
And as in a dim cathedral when the organ's note
is dead,
Music lingers, softly trembling, like a spirit that
has fled,
So these notes of seraphs' hymning, floating down
the arching sky
Are repeated in the chambers of my soul eternally.

SERAPH VOICES.

"One there is whom angels worship!
Lo, His heart is pierced for thee;
And thy thorny crown of sorrow
First upon His brow did be!

"Waiting once where tomb encircled
Life and Death together slept,
Voices said, 'Behold He loved!'
Others answered, 'Lo, He wept!'

"Angel wings in worship holy,
Can not hide from Him thy face,
Seraphim in fullest chorus
Cannot hush thy prayers' sweet grace—

"What is that which draws us nearer?

But a broken, whispered word;
Yet we strike our harps triumphant,
For in heaven a prayer is heard!

"Glory! glory! now and ever

To the Holy Three in One.
That a *Miserere's* ended
And *Te Deum* is begun."

Y'ggdrasil.

Y'ggdrasil—the towering Ash-tree—

Though disleafing hour by hour,
Still with ever budding branches
All Heimskringla doth embower;

At its root in realm of Hela,

Gnaws the Nidhögg—dragon dread—
But its fibers never loosen
In the under-world of shade;—

'Neath its boughs three norns are sitting—

Drooping Urda, downcast, sad;
And Verdandi, ever busy,
And the third is Skuld the glad;

Water they from sacred fountain
Y'gǫgdrasil—the heaven-high—
Write in runes the lapse of nations
And of human destiny.

* * * * *

'Tis the Ash-tree of existence—
Y'gǫgdrasil—the heaven-high—
And its roots in realm of Hela,
In the darken'd death-land lie.

Died a toiler in the market,
Fell a hero world-renown'd,
From high Y'gǫgdrasil—the life-tree—
They were leaves that fell to ground.

Of the norns by Mimer's fountain,
Drooping Urda is the Past,
Busy Present is Verdandi,
Skuld, the Future, is the last.



"Hearts Most Pure and Simple."

To travailing souls on Horeb
The burning bush is shown;
By hearts as white as lilies
The Christ's sweet words are known.

To-day, through forest gardens
And on the mountain stair,
As they who walked in Eden,
We with our Lord may fare;

On stony way-side tablets
His writing we may trace,
And see His loving gospel
Within a violet's face.

For seer most pure and simple
Unrolls the fern-leaf scroll,
The parchment of the pine-tree
Is open to his soul;

The spring-time's resurrection
Is sermon plain as words;
He hears an Easter anthem
In carol of the birds.

The world, to such, is only
Like eastern paradise,
An outward circling garden
Where palace walls arise;

The palace door may open
At morn, or noon or night,
And flood the little garden
With heaven's effulgent light.

Ruined Cities of Mexico.

Nature holds in sacred trust
The secret of these cities,
Covers with her robe their dust
As whom a mother pities.

Mantling vines she close entwines
Concealing empty spaces;
Crimson leaves like purple wines
Pour through their holy places.

Priestess of an ancient faith
She waits a god's returning,
Sunshine's fire, like altar-wraith,
Her sacrificial burning.

To the Crocus.

Thou art a lighted taper
In the hand of spring;
Thy fair flame cleaves the vapor
Like a wild-bird's wing.

Sweet Mother Earth beholding
Lifts her blankets wet;
While shaking them and folding
She calls the violet.

Chained runlets see thy beacon
And their fetters break,
The water-falls awaken
And their timbrels shake

Blue reeds their javelins quiver,
Iris sword-blades spring
From scabbards by the river
At thy flickering.

Thro' sorrow's dreary winter
Wandered one forlorn;
Thy ray her gloom doth enter,
Buds of hope are born.

The Cedar and the Pine.

The cedars are a goodly folk
Of old and honored line,
Their tents are spread on Lebanon,
They drink Mount Hermon's wine

The psalmist sweet of Israel
Told of their strength and grace,
And saith the song, "Like cedars fair
Is my Beloved's face!"

I paused within a cedar grove
'Neath trees of mighty girth,
And prayed them tell me mysteries
Of sky and sun and earth.

They stood as if entranced in dream
Of Lebanon the high,
Nor knew that I had questioned them
Nor cared that I was nigh.

With saddened heart I turned away
And sought our mountain pine;
And knelt beneath its branches wide
As kneeling at a shrine;

When straightway from its towering top
And outward thro' the pine
Its fringed branches trembled slight,
It shook them for a sign.

And softly as from harpsichord,
There came a murmur sweet—
With faint æolian thrill of sound
A cone fell at my feet.

On piney couch beneath the tree
I breathed an air like wine,
And listened to a spirit play
The harp-strings of the pine.

Deep awed, I heard melodious runes
Revealing earth's sweet mystery,
And of the future of the world
Triumphant songs of prophesy.

Tho' cedars crown Mount Lebanon
And drink fair Hermon's wine,
No charm of minstrelsy is theirs.—
Chant on, my prophet-pine!

Velvet and Lace.

I.

A weaver moved his loom in the sun
And patiently wrought till day was done.
His pattern he took from the moss that grew
Down at his feet, and from violets blue
That dotted the mosses through and through.

And this is how the weaver wrought,
The velvet that fair Inez bought.

II.

A spider dropped his thread one day,—
It fell across a spinner's way,
The airy thread the spinner caught,
And at his spindle tireless wrought
'Till he had matched the spider's line
With thread that wove a web as fine.

Thence came the dainty bridal lace
That veiled the blushing Inez' face.



To an Egyptian Lily.

I.

Dost thou dream of lilies sweet
Standing with their silver feet
Hidden half in Égypt's sand,
Lapped by waters cool and bland?
Dost thou hear the winds that sigh
Thro' the swaying papyri,
Or the murmurs far away
Where the feath'ry palm-trees sway?

II.

By the darkly flowing Nile
Lolls the sleepy crocodile;
Heavy shadows that are shed
From the gloomy pyramid,
Are but semblance of the shade
That on Égypt's face is laid.

III.

Bald and blear by desert land
Mountain tops in sunlight stand;
On beyond in trackless path
Burns the desert's fiery wrath;
Bitter bane and blight they throw
On the river smooth and low,—

Yet thy beauty like a smile,
Lights the darkly flowing Nile!

IV.

Stainless flower of truth art thou!
Light upon dark Nilus' brow!
May'st thou, golden hearted bloom,
With thy rareness of perfume,
Holding all thy stainless life
Thro' old Egypt's gloom and strife—
Be of her a prophesy,
Showing fairer destiny
Rounding in the fruitful years—
Egypt, standing 'mid her peers,
Royal, stainless, fair light-crown'd
All her galling chains unbound;
Wearing gold and snow of truth,—
Garb of an immortal youth.

Elim.

Exodus, xv: 27.

Up from Marah's bitter waters
Through the desert's sand and heat,
Toiled the tribes of ancient Israel
With their weary, wandering feet;
Came where waving palms of Elim
Cast their shadows dark and deep,
And the valley fresh and fragrant
Dreaming lay in dewy sleep.

There the splash of cooling fountains
And the streamlet's gentle fall
Sounded to the weary pilgrims
Welcome as an angel's call;
And they rested in their journey---
Spread their tents in palmy shade,
Slaked their thirst where happy waters
With the dewy grasses played.

So it is in life's long journey;
Oft we cross the desert waste,
Linger by the wells of Marah
And their bitter waters taste.
Yet Jehovah leadeth surely
Unto Elim's cool and calm,
Where beside His living fountains
Grows the victor's waving palm!

And without life's wildernesses,
All their weariness and pain,
We, perchance, must miss forever
Palm-girt Elims to attain;
E'en the bitter wells of sorrow
Turn to waters sweet and calm,
And beside their healed fountains
Swells at length a joyful psalm.

The Lesson.

Count thou nothing hard or useless:
Heavy burdens lifted high
Give a stature and a strength,
But the lesser things at length
Thou shalt learn to magnify.

Smiles one, only for the comfort
Of a little earth-tired child,
From its blush-rose plucks the thorn,
He shall find on heavenly morn
When life's statue is unveiled,

He has given finer limning
To his soul's uplifted face,
Than on seraph's brow had shone
If in mighty deeds alone
Had been sought a royal place.

"With Two Worlds' Wealth."

Fair-browed babe, untouched by sin,
Purest angels are thy kin;
Sweetly art thou dreaming yet
Of the realms that we forget,
And the light within thine eyes
Thou hast brought from fairer skies;

Accents of that vanished shore
Linger in thy baby lore,
Radiant smiles thy sweet lips wear
For thy kin-folk in the air,
While thy dimpled hands in glee
Catch the gifts they bring to thee.
Oft I find thee talking low,
And thy fair face all aglow,—
Alas! thy words I can not tell
Though they hold me like a spell.

With these two worlds' wealth for thee
Thou art sovereign more than we;
Thou art wiser too, my king,
For thou sittest questioning
With a wisdom deeper far
Than our truest answers are!

What do years that sit and wait
In the purple halls of fate,
Hold for thee, my baby king?
Is it myrrh that they shall bring
As their free-will offering?
Myrrh and frankincense belong
Only to the good and strong.

May I see, my laughing-eyed,
When thy soul's strength shall be tried,
That thou wearest royally
Crown of man's nobility.

The House.

We built a house—my heart and I—
It stood before us fair and high.
Its arches spanned with airy grace
Tall balcony and fluted space
Where thoughts, like wingéd birds might cling
And fold their wings or flit and sing;
Its far façades against the sky
Took shape from clouds that floated by

Within was rest for heart and eyes,
Each sep'rate place a glad surprise,—
And yet no hammer's clarion sound
Had broke the sacred stillness 'round.

We wrought alone—my heart and I—
Upon a mountain, with the sky
Cloudy-bastioned, arching nigh;
Then other builders came and wrought
Upon the pattern we had brought;
And when they said their work was done,
We came—and wept—at set of sun.

For lo, the house they had upreared
Was not the one that had appeared
Upon the mountain's summit high;
And sore we wept, my heart and I.

The artisan I could not blame,
He reared full well by rule and name
What we had built—my heart and I—
From thoughts within us and the sky!—

In heaven, perchance, swift thought uprears
The house that unto thought appears.

We build a house—my heart and I—
To be our dwelling by and by.
The light that shines where is no night
Shall try the house, if it be right;
And One who stands with truest meed
Shall measure it with golden reed.

"Morte."

Hush! the fairest hands I know
Lie as still as lies the snow,
And as white.

Sing! the hands that touch the Throne
Are the ones that clasped thine own
Yester-night.

Weep! the sweetest eyes of all
Sealéd lie beneath the pall,
Love-light flöwn.

Look! where heavenly glory lies
Smile on thee the same sweet eyes
Sweeter grown.

What of the Night?

Night winds with their fingers fine
Sweep the harp-strings of the pine;
Touch as with a courtier's grace,
Brier-rose's sweet and blushing face;
Praises tell to violets blue
Draped in mosses, gemmed with dew.

Rivers widening deep and strong,
Chant their purpose in a song;
Pause in winding ways to kiss
Little grasses into bliss;
Mirror faithful from the skies
Moon that lighted Paradise.

Winged shadows darkly sweep,
Heavy night-dews silent weep,
Star-shine sends its glory down
On the grasses gem-set crown,
Trailing moon-beams soft and white
Fringe the seamless robe of night.

To the Sea:

O! thou mighty restless main,
Groaning, travailing in thy pain,
Almost human is thy cry
Lifted to the bending sky.
By thy struggle and unrest,
By the heaving of thy breast,
By thy climbing but to fall,
By the anguish of thy call,
By the spreading of white hands
On the even shifting sands,
By thy raising thro' the air

Half an anthem half a prayer,
By these all—and more than these—
Comes the dawning of thy peace!

On thy bleachéd, silver sand
Lo, a seer shall one day stand;
He shall thro' the ages look,
Reading from them as a book;
Turn their leaves back to the page
When the world began its age;
Onward look with prophet's eye
Thro' the cycles that still lie
In the womb of Destiny!

He shall understand thy moan;
He shall make thy pain his own
Till he open as a scroll
All the sorrows of thy soul;
He shall be a mouth to thee
And shall utter reverently
All thy burdening mystery.

Monadnoc.

Purple-vestured stands Monadnoc
Just beyond our mother's door,
And my heart goes out to meet it
As the patriarch of yore

Went to meet on Plains of Mamre, ---
As is writ in sacred scroll ---
Holy messenger of heaven
With a blessing for his soul.

Great Monadnoc bears a message
Unto me who sit apart,
Message full of grace and gladness
To my weary, wayward heart;

No interpreter is needed
'Tween the mountain and my soul,
For its speech is plainer to me
Than the lore of worldly school.

Up against the cloudy fleeces
High it lifts its flowery bells
And the music they are spilling
Charms our plainer parallels;

All along its ferny edges
Cling the rainbow scarfs of dew;
Sway the dark pines on its ledges,
Ever changeless, ever new.

Soft the mountain's purple garment
Downward drifts about my face,
'Till my fingers touch its fringes
And its misty, sheeny lace.

Who am I, that great Monadnoc
Looks down from the sky to greet?
Only one who loves him duly,
Gladly lingers at his feet.

When I come up worn and weary
From the bustling, busy mart,
Fullest welcome does he give me
To his sturdy, steadfast heart.

Straightway falls from aching forehead
Burd'ning crown of care and pain,
And as one with oil anointed
Healed—I turn to toil again.

Eagle Wings.

I.

We built us a nest in the cleft of the rock,
We were close to the sky, and the storm's fierce
 shock

 Broke over our nest,
 And gave us its best
 Of the lightning's fire,
 Of the thunder's ire!

We heard the trumpets that blew through the sky,
They almost touched us, they were so nigh!—
We spread glad wings on the storm-cloud's crest
And braved its bolts with exultant breast.
Our cry went forth with the tempest strong,
Our cry and the tempest made one song.

II.

We build a nest in a valley fair,
We part the grasses' flowing hair,
And down mid dews and ferny things
We fold a while our eagle wings.
We feel the earth's warm pulses thrill,
And hear her dewy buckets fill,
We see a languor from the sun
Through all the happy blossoms run.

Mid buds where ground-birds flit and sing
We weave a nest of twig and string;
We line it well with fringing moss—
Can we e'er dream of lack or loss?
'Tis softer than the aered nest
Upon the mountain's rocky crest,
And warmer here the sunbeams lie
Than where the white cliffs fret the sky.

III.

Far above us in the blue
There are sounds that thrill us through
Is it swoop of eagles high?
Is it that their clarion cry
Echoing through the stormy sky
Wakens in our hearts reply?
Ah! 'tis hard for eagles born
Close against the brow of morn,
To lie still in valley nest
With its mossy fringes dressed.

A June Idyl.

Listening where a river passes
Through the ferns and meadow grasses,
I can hear the dews distilling,
Hear the tender buds afilling;

Flowery lips with joy unsealing,
All their secrets are revealing;
Happy roses soft unfolding
Show me what their hearts are holding;

Little branches lightly swinging
Set their faery bells a ringing
Telling tales of summer weather
Humming bees and purple heather

With the sweetness running over
From the lips of honeyed clover,
I have nectar richer, sweeter,
Than the famous stores of Hybla!

Never king in royal palace
Drank such wine from jeweled chalice,
Though 'twere brewed by Bacchus olden,
As I quaff from king-cups golden.

I have joys of newest forming—
Shining dew-drops every morning==
Nature opens wide her treasures,
Lest me choose me out my pleasures,

Tells me that her shades of sadness
Are but *sesames* to gladness;
Shows me work and peace are sisters,
Lest me hear their happy whispers.

\ —————

Dowered with strength from rock-ribbed mountain,
Filled with laughter from the fountain,
Dreaming where the sunbeams quiver,
Fearless with the fearless river,
Learn I lessons sweet and tender
Of a richer, fuller splendor;
Read in mount and meadow's meetness
Of a holier completeness.



A Winter Parable.

In undiscovered parallels
Mid pole-star space an artist dwells;

He came to earth, grown dark and cold,
And reared a new world from our old.

Behold it lie 'neath morning's rays,
A gleaming, glittering world of praise.

'Tis like a childhood's fable sweet
To see on earth this silver street,

To find our trees, at eve so bare,
Now blossoming with crystals rare,

Our dwellings gemmed in triple whirl,
Each sev'ral gate a single pearl!

Lo, from this wintry page I read
A parable that suits my need,

At eve 'twas whispered, "One has died,"
But now, "Behold the glorified!"

The Path Across the Stream.

"Before a shrine in this famous cathedral two forms reposed awaiting burial. One was a babe, sleeping as sweetly as on its mother's breast; the other was an aged grand-dame, but the expression upon her face was as peaceful as that of the child. At head and feet of both tapers were burning to light the departed spirits on their way.

"In our hearts we gave thanks for a faith lighting the dark passage from Life to Life."

The billows gleam, how brightly gleam,
Their light is from the heavenly shore;
How fair the path across the stream.

Who walks in yon translucent beam
Hath holy peace forever more—
The billows gleam, how brightly gleam.

The child's white feet like lilies seem,
His dimpled hands reach on before—
How fair the path across the stream.

He smiles as in the sweetest dream
While One we see not leads him o'er—
The billows gleam, how brightly gleam.

Earth's thorny pathway, chill and breme,
The aged feet shall tread no more—
50 How fair the path across the stream.

Soft airs with wafted welcomes teem,
One beckons from the nearing shore—
The billows gleam, how brightly gleam;
How fair the path across the stream.

In Raiment of Needle-Work.

Psalm 45.

The daughter of the King is fair,
Her garments trail with myrrh,
And all the cassia of sweet life
Like cloud encircles her:

The daughter of the King is fair,
And to the King is brought
In raiment of fine needle-work
That her own hand hath wrought;

Its folds that are the fairest
She wove in patient pain;
Its flowers that are the rarest
Were wet with sorrow's rain.

A Vision of the Thorns.

Many visions come to me.
Once upon a wild thorn-tree
Saw I all its branches brown
Bend and shape them to a crown;
And the drops of dew that run
Down the thorns shone in the sun
Red as blood that kissed the thorn
On the crucifixion morn.

Voice I heard as passion-low
As a wood-dove's tremolo,
Chanting in the thorny tree,
Psalming, singing ceaselessly;
"Felt the thorn Redemptive Blood
Ere it flowed on Holy Rood!"

Showed the vision ere it fled
"Who wears the thorn hath crownéd head."

The Valley and the Mountain Pass.

Mountains once I sought to climb:
But the purple heights sublime
Towered so far above my head
That I softly, sadly said,
'Tis not meet that I should spoil
All of sweet life with such toil;
I will tarry here awhile
Where the rose and river smile:
Ease it gives my weary feet,
And the river singing sweet,
Bears away my soul's unrest
Like a leaf upon its breast;
Languid breath of lotus-bell
Lades the air with dreamful spell,
And I care no more to climb
To the purple heights sublime.

Long I dallied by the stream
Lost in light, delicious dream,
'Till an Angel, sweet love sent
From the upper firmament,
Touched my soul with heavenly word
And its deepest fountain stirred.
Newly then my feet I turned,

Eagerly my spirit yearned
For the purple heights sublime
Which again I sought to climb.

But the feet that chose to stray
Where but scented rose-leaves lay,
Idly following so long
Gentle river's soothing song,
Found the mountains hard to tread,
And the torrents fierce that sped
Swift across the rugged way,
Dark'ning e'en the face of day.

Yet the mountain-pass is shown
Fairer than the valley, strown
With its rose-leaves and its dew,
With its river winding through
Here, each day, my soul is fed
On an eucharistic bread,
Ev'ry upward step doth bring
Strength to bear and heart to sing;
And my Angel sweet Love sent
From the upper firmament,
Shows me where thick stars are set
In a glorious coronet
High above the steeps I climb,
O'er the purple heights sublime.

M N E M E .

“Musing, the fire burned.”

"Where Memory's Embers Lay."

I caught a trailing wild-rose vine
And bent it to a lyre;
Pale roses swung, like wind-bells hung
Along the bended brier;

At night I mused before the fire
Where memory's embers lay;
Lo! while I mused the embers glowed
The lyre began to play.

The Casket.

Curious casket—mystery—
Carvéd margarite of the sea!
All thy silent voicefulness
Thrills my soul like strange caress.

Full thou art of mystic springs
As a shell of whisperings;
Quaint thou art as quaint can be
Carvéd margarite of the sea!

Iridescent, flashing thing,
Strangest fancies thou dost bring!
What the powers that in thee sleep
Troubling thus my spirit's deep?

Thou art quaint and sealéd tomb
Where in cerements and gloom
Thoughts are hidden, which like kings,
Once were living, crownéd things.

The Willow and the Rose.

Grew a rose-tree in its beauty
By a river æons past;
Graceful was its swaying shadow
In the flowing river cast;

Brightest sunshine of the morning,
Dewy chrism of the night,
Gave the bush in pride and passion
To a bud that like a light

On its slender stem uplifted
Made a glory round the place;
White as snow the rose-bud opened—
Never flower had fairer face!

Close beside it grew a willow
Tall and strong—a kingly tree—
Its lithe branches lifted upward
Were a goodly sight to see;

Pleasant to it was the sunshine,
Pleasant was the tempest's strife,
For its roots were deep and clasping
And it felt a joy in life.

Shining veil of bride-like beauty,
Woven by the sun and dew,
Was the royal gift that morning
O'er the opening rose-bud threw;

This the vision that awaited
When the willow looked adown,
And a thrill of pain and pleasure
Shook the tall tree to its crown:

Then it ceased to watch above it
Snowy clouds, a fringe with flame,
Cared no longer for the sunshine
Nor for any winds that came;

But it bent above the blossom
From day's dawn unto its close,
And a flush of love and gladness
Lit the fair face of the rose.

This befell anear earth's morning,
Summers passed as summers will,
But the willow bendeth ever,
And the rose is blushing still.

The Gypsy Child.

My heart beguiled by gypsy child,
In fancy roved like Zinc'li wild!

The sun-kissed grace of dusky face,
The eye that told of bandit race,
Were spells another might resist,
But from my heart, the babe I kissed!

With hand upon her kerchief'd head,
Sweet marvel in her eyes I read:

Then thinking of life's thorny way,
Where hearts oft bleed and feet oft stray,
I longed to see an angel's wing
The little one o'er-shadowing.

With pride and joy the mother smiled
That I should kiss her dark-brow'd child,

"Ah, lucky ye'er and proud!" she said,
"List, would ye like your fortune read?"
Why bid I not the sybil try,
The gypsy crone with piercing eye?

Tho' change shall come, I know not how,
I would not that the *then* be *now*.—

Still turns my heart with strange unrest
To babe that lay on gypsy breast;
May she of Ishmael's outcast race
In Israel find a dwelling place.

Gull Lake.

Down upon the blue lake's brink
Once the wild fawns came to drink,
Dipped the silver of their feet
In the waters cool and sweet,
Fed from off the sedgy bank
On the grasses tall and dank,
Slept among the shadows near
Knowing neither haste nor fear.

Soon as fingers of the spring
Loosed the waves to dance and sing,
Came the wild ducks' happy fleet
Sailing slow, with grace replete;
There the stars that pant on high
Trembled in a second sky;
And the bird whose dainty nest
Down among the reeds was pressed,
Darting from the leafy bank
Trimmed its feathers while it drank.

Now the hands of man have made
Furrowed field where once was shade,
And the waves that laughed all day
Learn to toil as well as play.

But the clear lake flashes yet,
Like a crystal emerald-set;
Still its banks I know are fair
With the willows' waving hair;
Berries hang from trailing vines
Over coves as still as shrines,
Where clear waters pulsing slow
Whiten with the lilies' snow.

Of its banks my memory tells
Where pale orchids hang their bells,
Where sweet violets white and blue
Lift their meek eyes full of dew,
Where the yellow cowslip springs,
Where the lupine spreads its wings:
On the hill-slopes, well I know,
Where the bloodroots sprinkle snow,

Where 'neath leafy coverlid,
Pale anemonies lie hid:
Oft they gave me sweet surprise
With their troops of laughing eyes,
Coming ere the spring had kissed
Winter's gray to amethyst.

There are coves I know full well
Where I found the pearly shell,
Trim as any dainty boat
Ever fairy set afloat:
Here, to-day, those shells repeat
Rippling murmurs low and sweet.

In my soul's ear hear I oft
Distant waters lapping soft;
Often in my happy dreams
See again their silver gleams,
While I gather bloom and brake
From thy margin, crystal lake.

Annie Lee.

I have waited, calling vainly
For the little Annie Lee,
'Till the blossoms fell like snow-flakes
From the over-hanging tree;

For she left me in the autumn,
When the days grew dark and chill
When the withered leaves were falling
And the warbler's note was still.

But she spoke to me in parting
With a voice as sweet and low,
As the voices are in heaven
Where we all so long to go!

And she promised she would meet me
When a few more days had flown,
When the clouds had left the hilltops
And the early flowers had grown,—

Now, the spring has brought the woodbine,
And the apple boughs are fair
With the blushes 'mong their petals
Where the morning's fingers are.

All the breezes scatter gold-dust
From the king-cups on the hill,
Every bloom is dank with honey
And the wild-bees drink their fill,

I have called through all the wood-land
“I am waiting, Annie Lee!”
But the forest softly sighing
Sent the echoes back to me.

Still I know that she is waiting
And sweet troth doth keep with me;
In a land of brighter blossoms
I shall clasp my Annie Lee.

The Child and the Lilies.

In the thick growth of the rushes
Where the waxen lilies lie,
Where the star-flower shooteth upward
Leafy arrows fair and high,

With white feet among the pebbles
And the golden grains of sand,
Stands a child—as fair as morning—
Reaching out his eager hand;

He had caught the wond'rous gleaming
Of the lilies white as snow,
He has heard the waves beseeching,
Calling to him soft and low,

And has left the rose ungathered,
Left the wild thyme for the bee,
And the daisies and the clover
Tangled in a waving sea;

He has sought the peerless blossoms,
Whiter than the white sea foam,
Sought to draw them eager-fingered
From the blue depths of their home:

His white feet are almost buried
In the golden grains of sand,
And the blue waves circling round him
Gently draw him from the land;

His clear eyes are earnest, tender,
As a purpose deepens there,
And the longing of his spirit
Is as tho' he breathed a prayer;

As the cool winds fan his forehead,
Softly touch his paling cheeks,
He is truer type of beauty
Than the lilies which he seeks.

* * * * *

Down among the shining pebbles
And the golden grains of sand,
Lies a child—as fair as morning—
With a lily in his hand.

Wild Roses.

Not the roses deep and full
Making gardens beautiful,—
Ope'ning fold on fold of silk,
Red as blood or white as milk,—
Are the blossoms set apart
In "the holy" of my heart;

But sweet roses fair and wild
That I loved most when a child
Such as met me in the wood
Symbols of kind angelhood;

Weary was the homeward way,
Thro' a forest dark it lay,
And my heart stood still with fear
Mid its shadows dark and drear;
But where all the shadows met
In a jungle wild and wet,
Burst these roses on my sight,
Each a beacon of delight,
Saying to my sad child heart
God doth see thee where thou art,
He who bids the roses be
In His love doth go with thee!

Looking backward o'er life's dream,
Still those wild-wood roses seem
With their sea-shells' pinky fold,
With their triple crown of gold,
To my soul true ministers
And kind heaven's interpreters;

And I sometimes think I know,
That the same sweet roses grow
In the gardens of the skies,
Within the walls of paradise.

Childhood's Treasure.

Through the world my childhood knew
With its simple pleasures,
Ran a brook of skies' own hue,—
Dearest of my treasures!

Do its slight waves beckon still
In the sunshine's glammers?
Does their slender song yet trill
As in olden summers?

In its purple and its gold
Is the iris standing,
Royal as the queen of old
Mid the rushes bending?

Are the fern-leaves waving yet
Where the foot-log crosses?
Are the beds of violet
Sweet among the mosses?

Do the rushes sway and bend
As the light beck passes?
Shining jewels doth it lend
To the dipping grasses?

On it doth the forest shed
Robe of purple splendor
With its waving hem o'er-laid
By the sunshine's finger?

The Tress of Hair.

Tress I have so silvery white
Weft it seems of fair moon-light;
Once it lay in shining fold
O'er a face that men called old;
Yet each joy and pain and care
Left such lines of beauty there
That it shines the dim years through,
Sweetest face my childhood knew.

Memorial Day.

Fadeless garlands would I lay
On my playmate's grave to-day,
Amaranth and immortelle,
Changeless bay and asphodel;

I would weave them as no hand
Knoweth how, in all the land
To weave chaplets for the head
Of a hero lying dead!

With the brightness of their bloom
They should make his silent tomb
Beautiful as love's surprise
In the bowers of paradise.

But I may not bring to-day
Amaranth nor wreath of bay,
May not lay upon his tomb
E'en so much as wild-rose bloom;

For afar his grave is made,
'Neath the sky where once we played;
Where in hours of early youth
Grew our friendship's flower of truth.

Mayhap heaven bendeth down
Nearer than our souls have known;
He may even so receive
This poor chaplet that I weave.

The Pilgrim's Staff.

A pilgrim raised his head,
For lo, an angel said—
Azrael, the angel said,
“This threshold is the last, yon fold
Of cloud but hides the hills of gold!”
The pilgrim's staff fell on the place,
He passed beyond with lighted face.

Scarce touched his staff the sod
When like the almond rod—
The ancient almond rod,
It burst to bud and bloom and seed,
A symbol of the pilgrim's meed. —
The rod shall blossom æons hence;
One whispers, “Lo, 'tis influence!”

Flower fairer than it yet hath borne
May ope on resurrection morn,

Ullalie.

Once I dwelt with fisher folk
In a hamlet by the sea,
And my whole of love was given
To the maiden Ullalie;

Ullalie, the fisher's daughter,
With a face as lilies fair,
With the sunshine's gold entangled
In the light wefts of her hair;

All her life was full of beauty
As her face was fair to see,
And I could not choose but love her—
Love the maiden Ullalie!

But alas, the gray sea loved her,
Loved and wooed her tenderly
Whispered to her morn and even
Of his kingdom's mystery!

Told her of his strength and daring,
Sang her songs of love most sweet,
Brought her jewels for her wearing,
Swept his white beard at her feet.

One pale eve he found her walking
On the shelving shores alone,
And in fond embrace he bore
Downward to his jasper throne.

Evermore I sit and listen
At the gateway of the sea,
For my whole of love was given
To the maiden Ulalie.

Morning on Berkshire Hills.

I looked beyond the Berkshire hills
With reverent awe and wonder,
Beyond the glinting mountain rills
And burning bushes' splendor;

I thought to see Monadnoc's face
New majesty revealing,
But lo, a cloud swung down the space
The mountain's brow concealing.

So, once, when Israel's seer of old
Had faced the light eternal,
Veiled was his brow, none might behold
Its radiance supernal.

The Tomb.

A tomb, I have, of granite stone,
A rugged tomb with moss o'ergrown,
Upon the stone before its door
Is—"Obiit"—and nothing more.

By day and night I go alone,
And roll away the heavy stone;
I enter in the darken'd place,
And lift the napkin from the face;

I press the lips, close-sealed and cold,
To mine—with lack of smiles grown old—
And wonder which is dead the while,
Since neither mouth hath power to smile.

II.

The hour is come when I may take
My pale, sweet dead, for mine own sake,
And walk again the way that leads
Mid leaping founts and flowery meads;

With eyes that smile I now can see
The gifts her close hands hold for me,
And lo, as writ with meaning wide,

74 "The tomb was in a garden side."

The "Forget-Me-Not."

When blossoms first bedecked the earth
In Eden's happy bowers,
The Lord came down in cool of day
And walked among His flowers;

To each He gave its fitting name,
To each a loving word,
And blessed the garden He had made
Beholding it was good!

Again he came in cool of day,
And walked among His flowers,
But one He saw, a blossom fair,
Was sad in Eden's bowers;

The loving Lord bent tenderly
And raised its drooping head,
When, "Lord, my name I have forgot!"
The blue eyed blossom said;

No cruel word the Master gave,
"Forget Me Not," spake He,
And smiling on the sad, sweet flower,
"Lo, *this* thy name shall be!"

My Old-Time Love and I.

Far through forest aisles we wandered,
He—my old-time love—and I,
Where the shine and shadow mingle
As in human destiny!

With caresses soft the breezes
Brushed the furrows from each brow,
Tossed our tresses light as when they
Clustered gold instead of snow:

My thin hand lay half atremble
In my lover's broader palm,
While the peace of earth and heaven
Folded us within its calm:

Low we read in realm enchanted,
Poet fancies sweet and sage;
Read our own long life-time story
From illuminated page;

Saw where'er a tear had fallen,
Or a little grave been made,
There, the fairest flowers had clustered,
There, the rarest gems were laid.

Thus we lingered till the twilight
Curtained o'er the arching skies,
Then we came up from the woodland
Talking low in lover-wise,—

But you're smiling at my story,
It, perchance, should not be told,
Though my heart so over-brimming
Scarcely can its gladness hold.

We, I know, have passed life's morning,
Stand beyond its golden noon,
Linger in the closing twilight
Where the "good nights" come full soon;

But the love that blessed our morning
Making it a joy to see,
Is the crown of all life's journey,
To my old-time Love and me.

"Eaglets Have Been Reared in Such."

On a mountain sloping northward,
Mid its shadows dark and cold
Where the fiercest winds were driven
And the blackest storm-clouds rolled,

There, my childhood found its shelter---
Eaglets have been reared in such---
Knowing neither sunshine's glamour
Nor the south-wind's gentle touch.

Gray and far the sky above me;--
Yet I loved its silver shield,
White and cold the snows around me
Whence the avalanches pealed.

Yet I loved them—as the eagle
Loves his aerie mid the snows---
But he leaves it, but he spurns it
When the larger world he knows!

Once I climbed to higher summits
Overlooking all I knew,
And it seemed the more I journeyed
Somewhat still my footsteps drew,

'Till I reached a crag where looking
Downward far on either hand,
Cold I saw my home beneath me—
But afar the valley land.

There, in sunshine rivers widened
As my soul had never dreamed,
There the forest and the meadow
With rich flower and fruitage teemed.—

Does the eagle that has floated
In the glory of the sun
Seek again the hidden aerie
Where his simple life begun?

The Shepherd.

I.

Up mountain passes dark and steep
An Alpine shepherd called his sheep;

II.

The rills that fed the vale below
Had ceased their laughing overflow,

III.

And pastures green and dewy sweet
Grew black and bare beneath the heat;

IV.

But heights beyond the shepherd knew,
Where waving wealth of grasses grew;

V.

Where brooks leaped down the mountain pass
And threw their diamonds o'er the grass.

VI.

Unto the shadow of great rocks
The Alpine shepherd called his flocks;

VII.

But one there was with lambkin white
That would not climb the rugged height

VIII.

The shepherd turned from mountain crest,
The lamb he laid upon his breast;

IX.

Then came the mother to his side,
And followed close the shepherd-guide.

X.

My own white lamb in sweetest rest
Is borne upon The Shepherd's breast,

XI.

I follow now up mountain side
My snow white lamb and Shepherd guide,

XII.

The path I thought a rough, dark way
I find is lit with heavenly ray,

XIII.

While He upon the mountain crest
With my white lamb upon His breast,

XIV.

Hath love—such love upon His face
The mount doth grow a holy place.

Rockford.

Are the changing years a myth?
As the pine-tree whispereth,
Voices whisper in my ear
I had thought no more to hear;
Distance but a mist doth seem
O'er thee, city of my dream!

I can see thy river glide
With its silver, sun-flecked tide;
See it march with silent pace
And with shadow-darkened face,
Past the mounds that faithful keep
Annals of a race that sleep;
See it trip with silver feet
Down its broad and rocky street,
'Till it lingers wrapt in calms,
Holding in its circling arms

Happy Island fair and blest,
With its flower'd and ferny crest.

Unto fancy it doth seem
The enchanted, mystic stream
That the Poets say doth flow
Past the "Isle of Long Ago."



AOIDE

And The Lyre.

In The Pines.

Night winds swept the heavy pines—
Swept them mightily!
Through their boughs an anthem rose
Rich with harmony.

When the harp I sought to find
In the piney tree,
“Lo, the lyre is in thy heart!”
Said the pine to me.

A Song.

O tall and fair the lily stands,
With stainless brow and golden bands;

She bends to me,

She sends to me

Across the fragrance of her breath

The sweetest word that lip e'er saith.

Thou, up and down the garden walk,
Hast passed full oft my lily stalk.

But unto me,

And not to thee,

She sends across her fragrant breath

The sweetest word that lip e'er saith.

"Who Would Not Be Endymion."

Who would not be Endymion

And sleep for aye and aye,

With thee, Saléné, woman fair,

To kiss his cares away!

And yet, methinks, tho' sleep were sweet
And still and strong as death,
Thy kiss would be the subtle spell
To wake the bated breath:

Such light would flood this little mount
As Latnus never knew,
Endymion would crave to dwell
On Graylock here with you.

Odin.

God Odin, thou art kin of ours!
Thy blood in English veins
Thy thoughts, O Thinker, in our hearts,
Compel to bold refrains.

Thy bale-fires leaping up the heights
In Norseland's early days,
Have caught along the hills of time
And set the world ablaze!

Thy hero-heart that felt the thrill
Of nature deep and grand,
Saw further than thy children saw
Through sky and sea and land:

The forces that were Jötuns grim
Still match with mortal will,
And valor—fiercely slaying fear—
Hath holy virtue still.

Thy heart sincere, thy valor true,
Have keyed these after-times
And send a rugged ridge of truth
Through later runes and rhymes.

Wild Strawberries.

Wisest Merlin, dost thou know
Where wild strawberry clusters grow?

“Down in tangled meadow grass
Where light feet of children pass;

“Where the ground-bird’s nest is laid,
Half in sun and half in shade;

“Where a rosy mist is spread
O’er the fragrant clover’s bed;

“By the side of rippling streams
Where the purple iris dreams;

“Where the wild-rose drinks the dew,
And the violet wears its blue;

"Where the grapes' green cluster swings
Where the blackberry trails its wings;

"Little maiden, now dost know
Where wild strawberry clusters grow?"

Wisest Merlin, canst thou tell
How their scarlet berries swell?

"Evening through the darkness brings
Draughts of dew from unseen springs;

"Day by day is banquet spread
Of the sunshine's goodly bread,

"Whispering winds enchantment bring,
Rainbows arch them with their wing.

"Little maiden, now dost know
How the scarlet berries grow?"

Wisest Merlin canst thou tell
Why their scarlet berries swell?

"Comes a maid with ruby lips,
Rose-leaf palms and finger-tips,

"Pushes sheeny leaves apart
Hiding berries' blood-red heart!

"Little maiden, now canst tell
Why their scarlet berries swell?"

A Spring Carmen.

A stranger minstrel passes on,
Forsooth! he is a kingly one;
His harp of gold
'Neath mantle fold,
Is waked to play with sweetest art
By beating of the minstrel's heart.

On mountain side in vestal guise
'Neath snowy robe one sleeping lies;
She hears in dreams
The gush of streams,
And turning in her smiling rest
Shows knotted violets o'er her breast.

Beside her, kneels the minstrel low,
Forsooth! he doth more kingly grow,
His harp of gold
'Neath mantle fold,
Is waked to play with sweetest art
By beating of the minstrel's heart.

The Task.

My task is hard—as hard as one
Eurystheus gave of old—
Yet I must dare the fiercest seas
And bring the fruit of gold.

The dragon lives to guard the gate
Of Hesper's orchard fair;
And hardest fate! I do not know
What way its portals are.

No night of rest may e'er be mine
Nor day of languid ease,
'Till I shall bring the fruit I seek
From far Hesperides.

With dragons fierce I must contend,
With storms on land and sea,
With all I hate or fear or dread
Must I in conflict be!

Yet all exulting to the task
I cross an unknown sea,
E'en Ladon will I force to give
The guarded fruit to me.

The Golden Fleece.

O'er morning's azure hills of peace
Rove cloudy flocks with snowy fleece;

By shepherd wind the sheep are sent
Across the ethery orient.

In coming thro' the gates of day,
The rising tides dash golden spray

O'er azure hills and argent stars,
And fleck the white moon's silver bars;

The waves of glory onward sweep
To cloudy flocks of snow white sheep.—

One sought of old the golden fleece;—
I find it on these hills of peace.

The Breeze---A Lover.

A roving lover is the Breeze
Awooing all my blooming trees,
And like some other lovers here,
He woos the beauty that is near!
But yester morn he filled my rooms

With wreaths of snowy cherry blooms,
Ere night the blushing apple boughs
Confessed his kisses and his vows;
To-day the peach has cheeks aflame,
And trembles when he sighs her name;
Ere night the fickle, faithless Breeze
Will sing and sigh in other trees.

A moral's in my little song!
I prythee, do not read it wrong.

Legend of Abraham and His Guest.

At the door of Abraham's tent
Stood a stranger old and bent,
Craved to lay his staff aside
And 'till the morrow there abide;—
Forth the patriarch came with haste,
Fullest welcome gave his guest;
Brought cool water for his feet,
And a kid most tender, sweet,
From his herd he ordered dressed
As a supper for his guest;
This with cakes and milk he spread,
And beside the meat and bread
Laid fair clusters of the vine—
Globes of Echol's purple wine,

Such as Israel's spies since found
On the patriarch's vineyard ground.

Turned the old man to his food,
But by neither look nor word
Gave he token that he knew
Unto whom all thanks are due.
"Pause and honor thou thy God!"
Came the patriarch's hasty word.
But the stranger gray and old
Answered with defiance bold:
"Unto me no god is known
Save the god of fire alone."

Abraham then in wrath and might
Drove the old man from his sight.

Scarce beyond fair Mamre's oak
Passed the stranger, ere there spoke
Other Voice at Abraham's side:
"Where now doth thy guest abide?"
Bowed the patriarch with his face
To the ground, for all the place
Shone with light beyond the ray
Of the sun in fullest day;
From his lips low answer came,
"Since he honored not Thy Name,
Lord, I drove him from my door."
Gently spoke the Voice once more:

“Lo! these hundred years I’ve borne
All his folly, all his scorn,
Couldst not thou but give him rest
For one night?—He was thy guest.”

Humbly then the patriarch went,
Led again into his tent
Him, who, bent and gray and old
Trembled in the storm and cold;
Gave from fullest stores the best,
With a blessing to his guest.

Robins.

When the earth from slumber wakens
At the soft kiss of the spring,
Homeward haste the happy robins
From their foreign wintering;

Seek again the tiny houses
Where their last year’s loves were spent,
Find them full of dry leaves drifted,
And their smooth walls marred and rent
Yet they grieve not o’er their losses,
But with sweet talk never stilled,
Search the budding woods and orchards
For new haunts where love may build;—

There they hear the happy whispers
Of the young leaves hid away,
Hear them as they wake a little,
Asking of the coming May!

Robins know the pleasant stories
That the April rain-drops tell,
Thrilling with their gentle touches
All the wild flowers of the dell;

First are they to see the violets
Pushing folded leaves apart,
With their blue eyes peering upward—
Modest blooms so sweet of heart!

First to see the harebells swinging—
Fair as robin's egg in hue—
And to hear their clappers ringing
For the banquets of the dew;—

In old orchards fair and fragrant
With their wreath of mimic snow
Lightly wreathing gnarled branches,
Drifting on the ground below,

Find they nooks of sun and shadow,
Where their weary wings may rest,
Where their birdish loves are spoken,
And they brood o'er happy nest,

O the pleasure of the spring-time,
Full of wild birds' loving lore!
O the gladness of the summer
With its sweet work brimming e'er!

O the joy of first beholding
Dainty wee things in the nest,
And of feeling younglings quiver
Close against the mother-breast!

O the earth's sweet wealth in rearing
Darling nestful young and fair
And of teaching wings to winnow
Summer's blue and ample air!

Happy robins, do I wonder
At the first breath of the spring,
Ye so joyous, homeward hasten
From your foreign wintering?

Marshes.

Down in marshes cool and dank,
'Mid thick grasses tall and rank,
Where the deepest shadows sleep,
And the silent sunbeams creep,
Waving worlds of beauty lie
Hidden from the careless eye;

All day long the morning clings
'Round their cooling water springs;
Slightest breezes shake the dew
Into mists of rainbow hue,
Dropping diamonds on the strings
That the busy spider swings;

In the mosses soft and sweet
Starry blossoms hide their feet,
Spill their honey for the bees,
Shake their fragrance to the breeze,
Give a brightness to the grass,
Nod to all the winds that pass;—

There the pitcher plant is set,
And the water violet;
There the willow's crimson stems
Spring-time threads with silver gems,

While the summer's ardent rays
Fire the grass with lilies' blaze.

Cowslips, with their disks of gold,
Prank the marshes' velvet fold,
And osmunda waves her plumes
O'er the nymphæa's queenly blooms
Pimpernel and sedges fair
Mingle with the orchid's hair:

From white buds—like silver beads—
Hanging thick among the reeds,
Upward to the lark that sings
By the gushing water springs,
All the marshes' heart is full
Of the gospel—Beautiful.

Enchanted Ground.

Ye who weary with the load
Borne upon life's dusty road,

Think ye that no fairies dwell
On the mountain, in the dell?

Then your lessons ne'er were found
Upon earth's enchanted ground;

Ye have read stern reason's book,
Not from tree and cloud and brook;

Ye had learned far sweeter things
From the woods and water-springs.

* * * * *

When of fashion's cant I tire,
And of wise men's words of fire,

Then to fairy folk I flee,
Childhood's faith my *sesamé*,

Rarest secrets do they tell
Of our sweet earth's miracle;

To her heart they lean so near
Her unspoken thoughts they hear;

Hear her to her nurselings sing
Loving lullabies of spring,

See her wrap their feet from cold
'Neath her mantle's fleecy fold;—

Ere a seed from darkness springs,
Or a flower unfolds its wings.

Ev'ry garden lies apart
In the dreamland of her heart,—

Fairies see her teach the vine
How its slender stem shall twine,

How to grasp the oak that stands
Reaching downward helping hands;

They can tell the partridge's tune,
How to laugh back to the loon;

Why the wild ducks when they fly
Write Greek *delta* on the sky;

Why the ice on winter eves
Mimics flowers and frouded leaves;

They can teach us where to find
All the music of the wind;

Who doth tune the pine's harp-strings
Where Pan's fluted reed still sings;

How the wood-birds learn their lore,
What the song the sky-larks pour

From the bosom of the cloud—
Music-flooded, rapture-bowed!

Busy is each elf and sprite
Sunny day and clouded night;

Hast ne'er seen them guide the bees
Unto honey-laden trees?

Seen them push the leaves apart
'Till warm sunshine kissed the heart

Of wild strawberry chill and pale
'Neath the grasses' heavy veil?

Their brown hands it is that spread
Autumn leaves of gold and red

O'er the violet's tender head,
O'er the queenly iris' bed.—

Fragrant fern and eglantare
With the waving maiden-hair;

Deck the fairies' banquet hall,
While the twinkling water-fall

With its tambourine doth fill
Pauses of the whip-poor-will.—

Ye who weary with the load
Borne upon life's dusty road,

Seek the child whose days are spent
'Neath the forest's sun-flecked tent,

He will tell you with delight
Where the fairies meet to-night.

Feasting with them in the glen
Ye shall find your youth again.

King Frost's Wooing of the Rose.

I.

King Frost came down from the North Countree,
Seeking a bride of high degree.

II.

Armor he wore of a silver sheen,
And diamond stars on his breast were seen;

III.

He came in haste for his steeds were fleet,
But his heart outran their flying feet;

IV.

And near the close of an autumn day
He paused where gardens in glory lay;

V.

A stainless lily in satin dress
Stood fair and lone in her saintliness;

VI.

He passed her by, "She is white," said he,
"As maidens are in the North Countree!"

VII.

The lily drooped at his word of scorn,
No fairer knight had she looked upon.

VIII.

He paused not where the lady-in-mist
By prince's feather was lightly kissed,

IX.

Scarce glanced at poppies nodding and tall,
But hastened on to a trellised wall

X.

Where blushed a rose, and her breath was balm,
Her velvet cheek with its beauty warm;

XI.

The frost king whispered "Be mine, sweet rose!"
What her lips answered nobody knows;

XII.

Tho' in the annals of flowery lore
'Tis written, the rose was seen no more.—

XIII.

By trellised wall, on window pane,
The morn showed pictures of waving grain,

XIV.

Of Alpine vales and an edelweiss,
Of drifting snows and a field of ice;

XV.

Of vessels sailing o'er wind-swept seas,—
But fairer than all and over these

XVI.

Was traced—a knight with a silver crest
Who bore a rose away on his breast.

"Behold a Flower Went Forth to Grow."

"'Tis the first of Nisan, Rachel,
And at dawn, sweet wife, dost know,
If the God of Israel willeth,
I go to the plains to sow."

Then the good wife answered gently,
With a touch of Hebrew pride,
While her voice was sweet as fountains
Unto Joseph at her side:

"May the God of Israel bless thee,
Give to thee an hundred fold,
Making all the plain at harvest
Like a sea of rippling gold.

"Thou art right, oh, my belovéd,
For the winter's chilling blast,
And the flooding rains of spring-time
Like a fleeting dream are past;

"When the early morning breaketh
And the shadows flee away,
I will with thee to the palm trees;—
Lack of thee brings weary day!

"May the Lord of harvest send thee
Gentle dewes from Hermon's crown,
Let the sun-showers' gold betoken
Richest harvest for thine own.

"And, beloved, son of Israel,
Let us trust and work so well
That, perchance, our God may show us
Him of whom the prophets tell!"

* * * * *

On the plain the son of Israel
Sowed the seed to left, to right,
Thinking less of golden harvest
Than of prophet's words of might.

* * * * *

Lo! anear the faithful sower
Noting every grain of gold,
Spake The One whom Israel waited,—
He by prophets long foretold.

Lady Claude.

Mirrored fair, Lord Leon's bride
Lingers at the fountain's side;
Crystal diamonds linked with pearls
Hang among her heavy curls;

Lady Claude is very fair
When no jewels bind her hair,
But her diamonds are the pride
Of the lordly Leon's bride.

Let the dewy grasses shake
For this haughty lady's sake,
Let her see what wealth of gems
Deck the grasses' slender stems!

Lady Claude is queenly fair
Crowned with wefts of sunny hair.
Flowing down from brow to knee--
Wavelets of a golden sea!--

From thy quiver, mighty sun,
Let thy shining arrows run,
Let them lie on wood and wold
Like a gleaming crown of gold;

Let us see whose wealth is greatest,
Which of these shall gleam the latest.

All thy gold, O sun, is bright,
But the lady's locks are white.

Calendulas.

*"So called because they are in flower during the calends of each month
---that is, during every month in the year."*

Not sheeny cups of malachite
Uplifted to the sun,
Nor slender urns of lilies white
Can match my peerless one.
I know a blossom thou shouldst see,
The starry flower of constancy.

Calend'ulas with golden ray
My love doth wear in troth-knot gay;
She makes December fair as May!

One calls the rose his flower of love,
The pansy is for thought;
The minstrel winds that gaily rove
Can have the rose for nought,
And royal pansies will not stay
In days of darkened destiny.

Calend'ulas with golden ray
My lady wears in love-knot gay,
She makes December fair as May!

When disappointments darken life,
And winds grow winter-cold,
My miser heart turns from the strife
To love's unchanging gold;
Dark shadows flee when once I see
My priceless flower of constancy.

Calend'ulas, thro' darkest day
My love doth wear in troth-knot gay;
She makes December fair as May.

Roy and the Fairies.

"Is it true that there are fairies?"
Whispered Roy one summer day,
When the lilies and the lupines
Danced and nodded in their play;

And the mother answered softly,
With a far off dreamy look
As if reading from her childhood,
And the sweet world's fairy book:

"Look, my Roy, into the rosebud
 Where its fairest damask parts,
Something very sweet is hidden
 In its secret heart of hearts;

"Go among the bending grasses
 While the trembling dew-drops cling,
 Peer into the morning-glories
 Where their purple trumpets swing;

"See which way the ferns are bowing,
 Bending as if queens swept by;
 Take your nap on mossy pillows
 'Neath the blue tent of the sky;

"Linger oft'nest where the brooklet
 Glides and glints 'neath branches green,
 Come and tell me in the gloaming
 All the sweet things you have seen."

Roy is learning happy lessons,
 And his eyes grow wonder-wide,
 As he listens in the forest
 To the voices at his side;

What he finds in rock and runlet,
 What he learns from faun and elf—
 Hidden secrets of the wild-wood—
 He will tell one day himself.

The Poet.

All day long the poet sings
To a lyre with silver strings;
In his soul he nightly hears
Music of the starry spheres,
Listens to the rythm low
Tinted clouds make in their flow.

Forests with their waving hair
Lure him from a world of care;
There, 'neath shady baldachin,
Sees he spiders weave and spin
Threads of silver, webs of mist,
Dewy-jeweled, sunshine kissed,
Fittest woof to be the wear
Of the poet's child of air!

He can read the faint designs
Mosses write upon the pines,
Or with lover's heart disclose
Vedas of each flower that grows.
'Neath the evening's veil of mist
Hears he rose by dew-drop kissed,
And the hours of midnight tolled
By the lily's bell of gold.

Nature owns the poet's heart,
Knows it is of her a part;
Unto him she opes her store,
Shows him all her mystic lore;
For his joy she drops at night
Ruby red and chrysolite;
In the morning spreads anew
Tints of every name and hue!

East and west and south and north,
Through all lands she leads him forth;—
Treading lofty mountain roads,
Wears he purple like the gods,
And in vales where waters sing
Laughs he with the river king;—

Every morn she lifts the haze
From more opal-tinted days,
Each tomorrow leads him thro'
Sweeter valleys than he knew;
And the songs he sings the best
Are those borrowed from her breast.

Jewels.

Merry maidens count their jewels,
Hold them upward sunshine-kissed,
Name them as they drop them slowly,
"Fiery opal, amethyst,

"Jasper-stone and burning ruby,
Bride-like pearl, chalcedony;"—
So the maidens count their jewels;—
Only—only one have I!

But my jewel makes me richer
Than the Sind whose marble floor
He had piled with gold and jewels
From its casement to its door.

Once a prince came proudly riding
On a royal red-roan steed,
"Ne'er drew rein so kingly rider!"
Said my heart in very deed.

Though a royal minstrel, musing,
By his zithern, seek to tell
All the knight-hood of that rider,
It were past his miracle!—

Heart! I could not still thy fleetness,
And a glory swept the place;
Was it but the sun at noon-day
Or the love-light in his face?

On my hand his jewel fitted
Makes me heart and brow a queen;
Like a steadfast star it shineth
Earthly shadowings between.

Sweet-Fern.

Bit of courage! never daunted
Though in rocky meadow planted
Drawing strength from granite stone!
Gladly grow in barren places,
Thou hast by thy simple graces
Made the rough rock like a throne.

Every breeze that has caressed thee,
Every garment's hem that pressed thee
Thou hast filled with fragrances.
Sweet inspirer, prophet, preacher!
Thou art dew-anointed teacher
From the heavenly distances.

May I too lend gentle graces
To life's hard and barren places.
To each soul that touches mine
Be new hope and courage given,
Help to see, through clouds a-riven,
Lights along the harbor line.



lichens

From Life's Ledges.

Lichens.

Hoary lichens creep and cling
To the rough lip of the spring,
Catching in their cups of gray
Misty drops of silver spray.

Mimic goblets gray and white,
As if grown in pale moonlight,
Are ye beakers frosted fine,
Deftly carved with quaint design—
Beakers for the folk that dwell
In the shadow-tented dell?

The mountain wears upon its breast
The faithful lichens' silver crest;
When winds are rough and storms assail
They firmer cling nor droop nor quail.

Heart! thou wilt like the lichens prove
Unflinching? They thy type of love?

Olive Leaves.

Ashen pale leaves,
Fashioned frail leaves
From the sad Gethsemane!
How grew ye leaves? What knew ye leaves
Of the Passion's mystery,
Of my Master's agony?
What bloody sweat
On Olivet,
Drew ye with ichor from your tree?
Ashen pale leaves,
Broken frail leaves,
For your sorrow fell ye
In the sad Gethsemane?

The Statue.

I bring my statue
Into the public square
Where all the torches glare;
Their gathered light
Shall prove my work,
If it be right.

The Wraith of the River.

Art thou the wraith of the dead, O! thou mist?
Of the river in falling slain?
Thus doth the soul of the water released
To the heavens return again?

The Shrine.

I came upon sweet Nature's shrine,
The winds her vespers sung,
Upon a rose-tree's crown of thorn
Her beads of prayer were hung.

Flowers of the Night-Blooming Cereus.

Carvéd cups of alabaster
Sealed thro' all the light,
Broken in the hush of even
To anoint the feet of Night!

Seeking the Brook.

I heard a song in treble sweet,
Like rhythmic beat of fairy feet
Atripping over silver sand
Within a flower-embroidered land:

I followed where the soft song led
By slender leash—a silver thread—
'Till in the osier-curtained nook
I met the blue eyes of the brook.

The Brook.

The little brook it was so fair,
Its prattle was so sweet to hear,
 With heart-o'erflow
 It laughed so low,
I longed to take up in my arms
The little brook with all its charms
 And carry it forever there.

“Unto the Mountains of Hebo, to the Top of Pisgah.”

Sometimes the world has a rugged path
And we toil till our feet are pained,
And our hearts grow faint as we stand at night
And mourn that no more is gained.

But dawns at last a glorious morn,
Or descends a star-girt night,
When awed, we stand on the farthest hill
With the home of our souls in sight.

The Queen, V. R.

The Lord hath crowned her womanhood
With coronation holy,
Th' anointing oil of grief hath made
Her kin unto the lowly.

The Blue Bird.

Beautiful bluebird, where were you born?
"In a cloudy nest in the azure dawn."

Where learned your sweet and silvery note?
"From the ripple of clouds that over us float."

Why came from your cloudy bluebell nest?
"To drop a new melody into your breast."

One Lieth Dead.

One lieth dead since yester-morn
Who long had borne the scorn of scorn;

The hate of hate had been his bread;
But for sweet love he lieth dead.

Myself.

I stand in awe and wonder much
At this MYSELF I do not know.
It oft eludes my power to hold
And wanders where I cannot go.

With folded eyes I lie at night
And sleep in imagery of death,
Yet restless glides the strange MYSELF
Through realms where mortal ne'er drew breath.

I turn with fear I cannot still
From this mysterious self of mine
To Him who wrought and still controls
The mystery so near divine.

**"In the Desert Till the Day of His Showing
Unto Israel."**

He who opens royal highway
For the coming feet of Truth,
Shrove hath kept in wildernesses,
With the bread of man's distresses
And the soulful cup of ruth.

"Nature's Song and Story."

Not flaming sword nor cherubim
 Could hinder Nature's song and story;
 With heart attuned in Eden's glory
She followed man to comfort him.

Summer Lying Dead.

Down among the tangled grasses
 Found I Summer lying dead,
Shrouded in the leaves of Autumn,
 Faded garlands round her head.

While I kneeling gazed upon her,
 Sighing for her vanished grace,
Longing for her rippling laughter,
 Winter's white beard hid her face.

"The One Who Builds the Poorest."

The one who builds the poorest
 Has need to toil the more.
For him whom naught can conquer
 The gift is at the door.

For Me Alone.

He made the desert dry and the bosky wood,
The mountain's height and the river's road,
The thorny track, and the mossy way,
The fire by night and the cloud by day;—
They all shall be when I am gone,
Yet each was made for me alone.

"Lo! I am Day."

Long, sad and dark her night of pain hath been;
All her earth-life she hath known no other.
Death came, and simply said, "Lo! I am Day,"
Sweetly spoke, and low, as nursing mother.

The Dying Day.

The sun—a cup of gold—
The hand of day doth hold;
It is a stirrup-cup
She trembling, holdeth up.
With cold gray lip
Its wine doth sip;
The blood-red wine from stirrup-cup
Is shaken as she holds it up;
It stains the cloud, the mount, the lea,
Sinks the cup into the sea.

Morning.

By hands unseen, light scarfs of mist
Are lifted from the running rills
That wind about the waking hills
Like necklaces of amethyst.

The Carven Lilies.

"Once upon a time a walnut tree prayed that it might bear lilies." --Fable

Anguish thrills the listening wood
As the cutter's ax rings out;
'Tis the trees' beatitude,
Falls the walnut with a shout!

Subtle skill the carver holds
As he chisels night and morn.—
Lo! from out the wood's dark folds
Royal lilies have been born.

Leaves.

Leaves are the little children
The mother-tree doth keep;
When summer's day is ended
They lay them down to sleep.

Opals.

My maġi brought me opals.
They are frozen tears, I said,
Tears Eve in Eden shed!
A luster from her shining eyes,
The moon-light flooding paradise,
Imprisoned lie in opals!

Justice.

Very true the balance weigheth—
Tho' its weighing be not fast,
Brows that life to crowns has shapen
They shall wear their crowns at last.

In Memoriam.

A. B. D.

She brought me comfort that sad day.
I called her "friend" in simple way,
Nor knew her angel sweet and wise
Because she stood in human guise.
Alas! that we should be so slow
The angels at our side to know.

Osmunda Regalis.

Royal Osmunda, lissom and fair
With tresses light as a maiden's are,
And breath as sweet as from rosy lips,
Tell me, Osmunda, who sips, who sips?

Were I the wind that aroving goes,
I'd find the nook where the Osmund grows
And dwell with her in a vale apart
Or bear Osmunda away on my heart.

Art.

That is Art--the truest art--
Which is Nature's counterpart,
Showing in a younger face
Imaged fair the mother's grace.

The Beck.

Runs the beck with laughter wild,
Leaping cliffs like gayest child.

* * * * *

On the cold breast of the rocks
Lie its thin and whitened locks.

Natalia.

Art thou queen of fairy-hood,
Or a woman rare
Whose sweet spirit's inner mood
Maketh grow so fair?

Thy Giles.

Know thou—the dark, the chill, the frost,
None are upon thy garden lost.

Thy bower without these ministries
Must lack its fair virginities.





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